FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

"For a world united in prayer"

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Founded by Carl Allison Evans (1880 - 1956)

OUR PURPOSE: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of Fellowship among mankind.

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EDITORIAL

EGOTISM

IN A CERTAIN MOOD I am inclined to think that enlightened egotism is the best we can hope for from ourselves and our fellows. Not because it is ideal. But because, egotism being what it is, ineradicable except by bona fide saints, there appears to be no other real possibility. I can think of no one more egotistical than the people who suppose that they have rid themselves of it.

We are raised to be egotists. It is what our society says is right, and so my mother's household revolved around me and my brother, his did around his children, and so doubtless would mine if I had had any. What wonder, therefore, that when we grow up—I should say, when we grow older—we are apt to think we are the center of the universe, that without us it would not exist, and that everything that happens in it does so because it is our desire that it happen. From this point of view, we proceed, most of us, to set forth on a lifelong quest to maintain this notion, do or die—to keep the flag of self aloft and flying, no matter what intelligence or experience may hint as to the very oppositeness of the truth.

It has been my experience that we are willing to go to any lengths to protect this idea of our preeminence. In making this desperate effort we miss the reality of life, spirit, and God. The majority of us find them only when by some literally fortunate stroke of disaster we are forced to surrender our egotism. Some people I have known, many of them specially intelligent and gifted, have preferred to do away with themselves rather than with their idea of their unique importance.

The grown-up—that is to say, those who had grown wiser as well as older—maintain their equilibrium, I have observed, by divesting themselves of self-concern as it rises in them. Self-concern must be part of our very biology and chemistry, for, relax an instant, and there it is: back. My impression is that grown-

ups fight their egotism for the sake not of being virtuous but of being comfortable. They know that it is their fixation upon themselves that causes their worst and most chronic miseries. For example. . . What makes me more egotistical than anything else? Being uncomfortable. When I am that, I become a fanatic in my knowledge of what matters and what doesn't, what is important and what is not. . . .

In my own struggle with egotism—which it would be egotistical of me to regard as much much worse than yours — I have found one reliable source of help. And this is the immeasurable superiority of reality as it is by comparison to what I would wish it to be. The marvels of fate and fortune, let alone those of birth and death, are far beyond my meager powers of invention. If I open myself to such richness of experience, I find I forget all about myself. And this seems to be the best possible solution of all. —P.G.

Expect a miracle. Seek and you will find disappointment, anger, frustration, but in the finding, comes satisfactions of trying. Anger may be the gate to the ultimate. Wading the river toward peace is only one way of crossing; a raft is another, a bridge. A bird flies over, no matter how wide — and so can a thought.

Aldoux Huxley

POEM

Nixeon Civille Handy

Every hurt I ever had comes back
to leer and jeer at me.
Plumbline bound, I try to reach the edge
of hope. Taut, I stretch my life in two,
For and against.
If I forgive, the blaze leaps,
Burns the already burned.

When I can pray
He makes my day.

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS by Reuben L. Musey

A NEW BEGINNING — FOR A WORLD UNITED IN PRAYER

WE STAND on the threshold—the outset—of a new year not only in the lives of each of us, but for Fellowship In Prayer as well. As we look back over the past years for the Fellowship, they have been fruitful years, the most fruitful indeed.

Mainstream. . . .

A new beginning. . . .

Looking into the future is a little more difficult than looking into the past, and it becomes harder each year. But, with plans and projections the welcome task is not one without a challenge.

The New Year is fresh from the hand of God. Into the hands of each of us is given all the power to make his or her life just what he or she wills.

Twelve wonderful months—free and unstinted—containing three-hundred and sixty-five days for work and rest—nights for peaceful slumber are given each of us. The undisturbed tides ebb and flow, and the Master's strong hand rules the night and day, instilling in each heart the will to walk Godlike through this New Year, leaving behind each day a legacy for others.

Reflecting back, another year is past, an all-important one for the citizens of the U.S.A.—the bicentennial year—when Americans welcomed people from the four corners of the world.

The Founding Fathers of America established a nation that was then—and still is—unique in the world. Each individual was provided a political atmosphere of freedom in which he or she could bring out the best that was in him or her, and using his or her time and energy in whatever each wishes to choose.

In retrospect, another year has been buried in the annals of history. What remains are the memories of the past.

The Fellowship left its mark in the year past on the sands of time with the "Fellowship in Prayer Spirit of '76" Bicentennial Roll of Honor program.

And now, a new beginning, the opportunities of the future. All of us can turn his or her memories into lessons, and his or her opportunities into challenges. The eternal will of God has to be at work within each of us in a new beginning FOR A WORLD UNITED IN PRAYER to give each the vigor of a new purpose.

The road ahead in 1977 for Fellowship in Prayer the focus of the Fellowship will be broadened. "Horizons Unlimited," with attention focused on the religious heritage of America, which has always been the melting-pot of people from the four corners of the world, is our theme.

Long-range planning includes this year the history of the religions of the world. Plans are being implemented to make increased use of the various communications media to mobilize the spiritual resources of mankind.

A new beginning with "Horizons Unlimited" as the theme requires the aid, help, suggestions, and criticisms of the members of the Fellowship.

The thoughts of the future are full of plans for the days ahead as we stand on the threshold—the outset—of another year.

May all of us cross the threshold together with purpose. May all of us cross the threshold together with faith in One who goes with us. May all of us cross the threshold together with One who knows the way.

People of every faith have backed the movement of the Fellowship. This has been an on-going venture for over a quarter of a century. Through the bi-monthly publication thousands of Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, and Hindus have been able to join together in stimulating spiritual development through the constant practice of prayer.

Personally, I believe in our guideline— FOR A WORLD UNITED IN PRAYER—as well as the praying hands of the Ger-

man Renaissance painter Albrecht Dürer gracing the cover of the publication.

Time in its passing and God in His way have guided the Fellowship, and the dreams, aims, and desires of its founder Carl Allison Evans have become after twenty-five years a reality.

Epilogue. . . .

When the last pages of 1977 are written for Fellowship in Prayer and the book is closed in the last hour, may—as each page in the book of Fellowship memories is turned—record a year revealing "a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind" from a group of loyal, dedicated people working together that reveals to all the world "the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy."

Reuben L. Mosley

A NEW YEAR PRAYER

Dennis Barry Carroll

O GOD, who art ever the same, grant Fellowship in Prayer Thy grace so to enter this new year that all may count each day a new privilege of life, and opportunity to learn of Thee and share your grace with others.

SINCERITY

Blanche B. Landers

All jokes and funny stories have
a proper time and place,
Not in the house of God at all,
Not at the Throne of Grace.

Sincerity is sweeter than
Sharp wit in every way;
With most, a friendly clasp of hand
Will make a Happy Day!

TWO POEMS

Brother Edward Anthony Casaceli

Prayer

With a full heart, Lord,
I ask of Thee,
When in my darkest night,
To be my star.
So many prayers,
So many lonely souls,
So many difficult years,
Dear Lord,
To You alone I pray,
In You I place my
weary footsteps.
In Your bright light,
I open up my eyes
Through tears
To see beyond the pain,
The storm,
The road.
Give me Your hand,
Dear Father.

Sleep

There they go
Along the avenue in time,
Reflected
Along the glass storefront world,
So many footsteps
Rushing by,
So many faded flowers,
Memories,
Stairways,
Doorways,
Seasons,
Loves.
So many darkened hallways.
So many ticket stubs fill our pockets.
So many empty footsteps
Filled with tired moonlight,
Starlight,
Our half-lighted lives
Never really see the light of day.
Beyond our daily bread and butter,
We fall
Into a dreamless reality.

TIME FOR REFLECTION

Ann D. Franklin

There's time for reflection when winter comes,
Time for standing still, and looking inward.
There's a quietude about this season,
Conducive to contemplation and growth.
For the well-being of body and mind
It is essential to slacken one's pace.
It would be wise to emulate nature,
Taking time at winter for renewal.

FOUR TALES

Francis Merchant

1/ Recognition of Gifts

A DEALER IN WAX received a large shipment of tallow. He put it in a huge vat and liquefied it.

Inasmuch as he wished to reward his apprentices for their loyal service to him, he decided to confer a gift on them.

Calling them together, he said, "My vat contains a large supply of wax. I shall give each of you an ample amount that you you may use as you wish."

The apprentices were pleased, but each one used the wax in a different way.

The first apprentice made candles out of it and sold them for a considerable profit.

The second used what he received to manufacture soap.

The third ground the wax to bits and produced a valuable lubricant.

The fourth carved it into figures of saints and Buddhas.

The fifth found no use for the substance and roundly declared that the so-called gift was nothing but a burden.

The dealer commented, "A gift is not recognized as a gift until we make use of it. It's very much like Time, Life, and Soul."

2/ The Doctrine of Useless Things

BUDDHIST MONKS are told to pick up what people throw away and find a use for such discarded materials.

A monk who was metaphysically inclined meditated on this theme.

"What do people throw away as useless?" he asked himself.

"An ordinary man," he reflected, "may lose his life, but

only a spiritual man can find it."

"Life, which is precious, is treated as though it were without value. In wars, human lives are destroyed indiscriminately."

"Thought, a wondrous essence, is neglected in favor of irrational passion and deluding emotion."

"The soul, a priceless gift, is declared non-existent and therefore useless."

"Many people see no value in emptiness and yet it is a concept charged with meaning. Space is called emptiness, yet in space we live and move and have our being. The activities of men are often empty of content, but they know it not. If we could empty ourselves, we might see wonders."

And so the monk thought long and hard about what people generally discard. Towards the end of his life he was asked to express briefly what he had gained from his meditation.

"I have found spiritual riches in that which people throw away." he said.

3/ The New Ethics

THE GODS left the earth, then the half-gods, and then the heroes. At length only frail men were left, timorous, doubting, and self-centered.

The age had arrived when no man could be found with any useful qualities. Such attributes as nobility, magnanimity, courage, goodness, and spirituality had been redefined to fit the modern temper.

Finally no one could be found to govern, to teach, or to judge, for they did not possess the moral qualities necessary to perform such arduous roles in society.

A few persons urged that men return to the cultivation of the old-fashioned virtues, but others had a different idea, and prevailed.

"Let us," said the modernists, "establish a public-relations agency whose function would be to invest human beings with qualities they do not possess. A scoundrel, for example,

would be described again and again as a public benefactor, and he could then enter politics. A man who had more words than ideas would be described as a great sage and could become a teacher. A self-seeking bribe-taker could be described as a man of integrity and could become a judge."

Inasmuch as there was a dearth of people who possessed spiritual qualities, and since it would take too much effort to develop substantial virtues, this idea found much favor. From that time forth, there was always a surplus of politicians, teachers, and judges.

The theory was fine, but in due time there were wars, famines, floods, earthquakes. revolutions, and crises of every description.

The public-relations agency is having a harder time these days. Its directors are trying to show that the calamities are really blessings.

4/ Saving the World

"HOW shall we save the world?" the disciples asked the master, "for it is clear that our city is threatened by chaos."

"The saving truths must be set forth," the master replied.

"What are they?" one disciple inquired.

"They are three," said the master, "—the principle of cooperation, the principle of sharing, and the principle of joint responsibility for the whole human race."

Time passed, and nothing happened. Finally the master inquired whether any progress had been made.

"None," confessed a disciple. "We know what to write but have not the needed skill to express the saving truths with literary craftsmanship. Therefore have we decided to wait until we have mastered the art of writing."

"There was once a king," the master said, "who discovered that the enemy was at the gates, beleaguering the city. He immediately commanded his scribes to issue a proclamation ordering general resistance. The scribes began to dispute among

themselves regarding the literary style in which the king's order should be written—and while they disputed, the city fell."

"Does this tale apply to us?" a disciple wanted to know.

"If those who know can't write, and those who can write don't know, how can the city be saved?" the master declared.

SILENT TESTS

Cornelia Bagarotti

STEEL is tempered by extreme heat, the human soul by life's testing. Surely it is easier to be honorable or generous if one has wealth. Surely it is easier to be polite or gentle if one is surrounded by considerate, loving people. Surely it is easier to be patient if one is not rushed or exhausted. Surely it is easier to be forgiving or to have faith in good and God if one is not bereaved or the victim of cruelty or injustice. Surely it is easier to bear life's events with a smile if one is not suffering or in pain.

But does the soul grow strong and virtue triumph without the silent testing of life?

How can man really make a choice for good or God if he is not tried in the red-hot fires of life like steel until he too becomes tempered through testing.

The little, humble waitress harried by the boss, shouted at by customers, ignored and abused, who remains polite, considerate, and thorough under the testing of these conditions is not only a lady but a truly fine soul. In an environment which could create anger, bitterness, contempt or despair, she maintains her own climate of gentle calm. She has passed the test.

FOUR POEMS

Georgiana Lieder Lahr

1/ Silence

This all-pervading quietness
Of the Universe
Enfolds me:
I am wrapped in blue of sky
And white of clouds
As in a garment —

Blue sea stretches before me,
There is an inner calm,
So deep,
So pure,
So beautiful
In this stillness,
This hushed world.

No voice is heard —
Did I say,
"No voice is heard"?
How wrong I am!

God's voice fills the Silence.

2/ Little Things

I take such delight in little things,
Sparrows darting over lawns,
Orange tree,
Arrayed in blossoms
White, and glowing
Like a lovely bride
In our garden.

Hibiscus bush,
Bougainvillaea flowers
Of deep purple,
Palm trees
With graceful fronds
Etched across the sky,
Soft morning light —

I take such delight in little things!

I pause,
I wonder,
Then I ask,
"Are they little?"

3/ Turnabout

I tried to embrace the universe today,
Earth and sea,
Sky and clouds,
Everything that lives and breathes
Upon it;

But finite arms are far too small,
Too narrow,
Too limited,
To hold Infinity,
To capture Beauty
Such as this.

What to do?

I turned about,
And, lo —
The universe embraced me!

4/ This I Know!

On my way to class today
I met a rabbit and a butterfly.

"I'm glad to be alive!"
The little rabbit cried
As he hopped joyfully
Through the grass.

"See my beautiful wings!"
Called the butterfly
As it darted gracefully skyward.

This I know —

The creatures of God's world
Can teach me more
Than all the learned men
And books in universities;

But I shall go to class,
Interpreting what I see and hear
By what the rabbit
And the butterfly
Have *taught* me.

ALL THIS AND MORE

Nan Dawson Brigham

I'VE PONDERED LONG AND HARD over the comparison of birth and death. I have come to the conclusion that there is reason to compare the two most important facts of human life.

True, I was not capable of feeling or knowing fear, love, or any part of life itself prior to leaving my mother's womb; but immediately following my first breath, I knew much.

Love, concern, care, and understanding enveloped me, and I became rich mentally and physically.

The unseen, unknown Creator had shaped my body well. Had given me five senses, a mind to control and expand, a soul in which to store life's greatest treasures; a heart to share the love of humanity, and a conscience to direct my way of life. So, accepting these attributes gratefully and humbly, I now find contentment in the knowledge that my understanding Father, giver of life, will make my entry into whatever lies beyond death one of a kindred spirit.

Imagine how well planned were the first nine months of my introduction to life!

Knowing no pain, experiencing no apprehension. no comprehending anxiety, no dread and no foreboding gloom, I worked my way through a passage of darkness into the light of birth itself. I knew not from whence I was coming, nor where I was going, but nevertheless, as part of the Creator's plan, I became a living member of His beautiful world. My acceptance or rejection would eventually be mine and mine alone.

In my particular case, I feel that I fared rather well. Consequently, I thank my Creator daily for the family of which I became a member. Because of this family relationship my world has been a world of constant gain. The existence that revolved around the attitude of doing unto others what you would that others do unto you was richly rewarding. Accepting all that would enhance; rejecting all that would stain or mar my life has made the road I

have traveled straighter and smoother amid lasting peace and majestic beauty. I made mistakes but I learned from them, and with this philosophy I grew, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Now that accrued years have taken away my youth; produced a slowness in my walk and thought, and erased that secure feeling of infinite living. I find myself reflecting on the life I have lived. And this, in turn, brings me face to face with the inevitable thought of dying; something I never was wholly conscious of until recently. In dying, the physical body I have struggled to preserve will be completely destroyed. Realizing and accepting these thoughts, I must bring to surface my faith and lay it without reservation at the feet of my Creator.

I recall the number of times I've heard it said that we come into this world with nothing, so we must leave with nothing. I concede this opinion only from a materialistic point of view. Nightly I dream. And I have experienced the feeling of each of my senses in this "other world." Wholly comprehending, I have crawled into bed bone-weary but with a keen desire to dream, for I have found dreaming pleasurable. The vacancies in my life—brought about through death—have been filled in a joyous manner. Vitally real, my dreams have given me cause to believe that life, as I know it, will continue after I have walked alone through the valley, the shadow of death. Joyfully I will take with me my five senses, for they have evaluated and governed earthly treasures worthy to be stored. Will they now not open for me a door to see the light of God's countenance, to hear His words of pardon, and feel His tenderness, as I place my hands in His; then taste from His cup happiness as I smell the sweetness ejected in His eternal garden?

Whatever else I might have done, I have protected my soul, the storehouse, with a certain reverence; and filled it with all the heavenly treasures I have known. And to think I am promised more after death!

Matthew said it so beautifully (6:19-21): "Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor dust doth consume,

and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where-thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also."

I SHALL NOT WANT

Estelle D. Broadrick

MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE the worlds of health and finance are outside the realm of God's power and care. The Bible would teach us otherwise. We are told to "seek ye first the kingdom of God and these things shall be added unto you."

We are told "if thine eye be single, thy whole being shall be filled with light." First we must surrender our all to Him. Just as Jesus' garment was woven all of one piece, so must we—spirit, mind, and body—belong to Him. Then, when our eye is single, and we have fixed our minds upon Him, when He is the goal we seek, to be as nearly perfect as mortal can be, then all of the blessings we deserve shall be added unto us.

If I have the right to ask God to help me understand Scriptures, to flood my mind with understanding, then after the soul is comfortable surely I have the right to ask for my body's needs, health, and home.

The Great Creator who made my soul and its desire to unite with a higher power also made my mind and body and its need for bed and board.

The body is the house of the soul, and though the spirit is of greater importance, if I do my best to keep the temple of the spirit clean and shining, a fit abode for Him, I believe He will bless the temple as long as I live.

He will help me to help myself, to earn the money that pays for my food and a roof over my head, He will help me to rise above pain, above doubts and fears.

Much of Jesus' ministry was concerned with the healing of bodies, the blind, the lame, the lepers. We are all under the watchful eye of a great God, who marks even the fall of a spar-

row, who clothes the lilies of the field, and He tells us we are more than these.

Search the Scriptures, search your mind and heart. All that is unclean and unworthy, throw out. There is not room for greed, selfishness, self-pity, and Him too.

Seek out the silence and pray in stillness. Pray until you feel cleansed and renewed and strong for whatever is required of you. He will hear your prayer and He will answer.

The Lord's Prayer is still the perfect prayer. Pray it often, not only with your lips but in your heart. "Thy will—not mine—be done." This is the prayer that calls directly to the Father in Heaven, that acknowledges Him as such. As His children, we are dependent on Him for every breath, every heartbeat. There are other prayers, but this is the one perfect one. When you have only a little time, you would do well to pray "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Pray with perfect trust. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." The Lord is ours to depend on, to serve, to praise, to worship, to love.

He is the source of life, the Creator of All things. This is our true and living God. Search out all of the promises of the Lord in Scriptures and you will never doubt again.

There is new life, new health, new inspiration in the direct line of prayer to God. Your troubles and trials can be dissolved by Him, providing you love Him with all your heart and mind and body and soul.

He should be—He must be—first in your heart and mind. Do not allow anything or anyone to crowd Him out. The little things that seem so important are trivia—compared to Him. With Him, you have everything even though you may have nothing. Without Him, you may own the world and have nothing—and be nothing!

I shall not want because I choose to walk the way He would have me walk. I choose to do His will, realizing that His is the far-seeing vision. His wisdom is greater than all of the wisdom of man combined. What would seem best to me would probably

wreak havoc in my life and many others', therefore I am willing, even eager, to be directed by Him—who is All-Wisdom, All-Love, and All-Mercy.

INHERITANCE

Marion J. Richardson

THEY FOUND THE LETTER in her purse. . . it was written by her son:

"Dear Mom: When you and I were visiting in your house recently, you asked if I still wanted that row of pictures along the stairs. I said 'yes' — and then you said something about it's not being much of an inheritance.

". . . I guess few people anywhere at any time ever got more from their parents, and especially from their mother, than your eight sons and daughters. . . . We inherited great physical and mental health, and who can say this isn't the greatest gift of all? But, in addition, to have raised a family that is full of respect for the rights of others and for the right of each of us to develop in his own direction — that is an even greater gift. You must have had a very clear view of what is right and decent to have made so much sense to your children. . . I can only stand in awe of the odds you faced in the critical years — always more children, no money. For us, you never let these become more than minor and passing problems. Not important enough to keep us from a good education, and never excuses for bad behavior. . . Our house was a kind of launching-pad, and you launched a large, healthy, decent family. I believe these things are our real inheritance from you."

This family lived in the mid-West, but the son who wrote the letter is now an executive with a prominent advertising firm in New York City.

VALUES

William Walter De Bolt

Flowers are born in darkness
Before they bud and bloom,
And sunshine visits only
After storm and gloom.

Cold and silence always
Make the robins sing,
And we must live through Winter
To be aware of Spring.

CLOAK OF LONELINESS

Marjorie Sharp Carter

Loneliness is a bittersweet penance . . .
I hug it to my heart
Like a gentle wound.
I wrap it round me
With a saddened sense of fitness,
For it is an angelic shield
Of quiet shadow,
Protecting me from worldly clamor
And from the noise and chatter of people.

Without you . . .
Loneliness enfolds me
Like a somber gray cloak.
Outside of the sharpness of piercing lights,
But inside my gray shell
Of muted minor music,
I rest in quiet peace, centered in God,
And listen to the whirring of time . . . .
I count my rosary beads
In patient silence. . . .
Loneliness is a bittersweet penance.

The purpose of God is to explain humanity to itself, individual by individual. He illustrates his purpose through religion, which is never an idea *of God* — but an experience. —*Aldous Huxley*

HOW TO RECEIVE HEALING

Mildred Long

I AM SPEAKING out of my own experience.

For eight years I was in a state of semi- or total invalidism before I really began to regain what had been lost. Even then, it took six years before I had strength, balance, and muscle-control to be able to walk alone on the street or anywhere in public.

The sickness or injury is physical, and we have medicine, physiotherapy, and diet to help in this area. But my emphasis here is on what we do for ourselves. It is generally conceded that there are mental and emotional causes back of most illness, and especially chronic conditions. So healing is largely a process of learning, of changing one's outlook on life, one's habits of thinking and doing. It involves knowing what to do as well as discipline and perseverance in following through.

Let me say: I do not preclude instantaneous or speeded-up healing. But I am convinced of two things: unless the personality is brought into harmony with God's laws of mind and spirit, physical healing cannot be permanent. Also, besides that, in my life my life-pattern was completely changed and I developed a latent talent which led eventually to a more completely fulfilled life. It all worked out for my good, as Paul declares: "For we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

Follow me, then, through the pathway by which with God's help I made healing permanent. It was no less a miracle than the sudden healing that comes to some.

Perhaps the first realization was that I had a deeply buried sense of guilt. Romans 8:1 says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." This thrilled me. I considered myself a child of God. I ought to feel forgiven but I did not. I still carried a heavy weight of guilt, regrets, sorrows over past failures and aberrations. I prayed, struggled with myself, and searched for understanding. It came first in the concept that the only way I could lay down this burden was to lay myself down at the foot of the Cross.

Later, much later, I understood that all these negative emotions have their basis in the self and self-will. Desiring to be whole, I persisted in submission to God's will. One affirmation I used was: "I am a child of God, and everything I do I do to perfect God's plan in me." I quoted: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. . ," "I am the Lord that healeth thee," and other Bible promises. Gradually the consciousness began to grow that I am God's child and He wants to heal me. He wants all good things for me and has promised them. I must accept.

Now, acceptance requires willingness and submission. And I faced the problem one day: Do I *really want* to be healed? I counted the cost either way and decided in the affirmative. An indecisive mind at this point could have blocked all progress. For I learned God can do nothing for us except what He does through us and with our cooperation.

This means I had to envision healing: affirm it, expect it, and do and think those things that would promote it. Therefore I used my affirmations with more purpose, more assurance, more concentration. I recalled Paul's instructions about what to think on: "Those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report." I recalled other Scripture: "As a man thinketh so is he," "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," "Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Daily, hourly, I directed my thinking toward God and His word. And often toward other things that would keep me from thoughts of my physical condition or too much introspection. I told myself funny stories and laughed at them. I made lists of rhyming words and composed poetry. I kept on with the writing I had been doing for a religious magazine.

Someone told me to set up a daily get-well routine instead of a be-sick one. I did this. It helped me adopt a positive attitude and I tried to live as normal a life as was possible.

After endeavoring to accept forgiveness for myself, I discovered one day that forgiveness is a two-way street. The Lord's Prayer teaches us this: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." I must forgive all those who have wronged me or hurt

me and all circumstances that have seemed harmful. And there were several such in connection with the accident that left me crippled for life. That was not as big a hurdle however as the forgiving of myself.

There was another problem. The Swedish masseur who was giving me treatment pointed out my extreme sensitivity. My study told me this was self-centeredness. To realize this made me more self-centered. A real battle was on. He also told me that the muscle spasms were largely of psychological origin. This was a piercing blow. I knew it in part, but I did not want anyone else to know it. It presented a crisis. I was now so overcome with fears that muscle spasms might spoil the treatments that I had to tell him not to come any more.

Those were days of great soul-anguish and struggle. But I did not give up. Help came from a different direction. A lovely lady, a masseuse, came and using different methods was able to help me. She implanted in my mind a concept that had never taken root before. This was: "God is within me." His Spirit is at work in me. This stressed the fact that I must cooperate with God in faith believing so He could do what He wants to do in me and for me. Thus my search for Truth became more deeply spiritual. The desire was quickened in me to come into perfect harmony with God's will and plan for my life. This lady gave me an affirmation which I have used all these years since:

"God's hand controls and directs the affairs of my life. And His healing Spirit is manifest in renewing and rebuilding the cells of my body. That I may come to that perfect expression of life in Him which is balance and peace and power."

She also taught me about silence—a concentration of mind on God which needs no words but brings peace and quietness to the spirit. The meaning and blessing of silence continued to grow and I wrote many poems on the subject.

Even with all this help, at the end of eight years I was worse physically than I had ever been. It was then that God definitely answered my prayer and opened the way for me to go to a private Rest Home. There for the first time I was under the care of a physician-psychiatrist and his wife, a physiotherapist and dietitian. They taught me the power of the mind and the nec-

essity for me to overcome this sensitiveness, this negative reaction to circumstances; to gain the ability to remain secure within myself and become detached to all negative things and persons around me.

Here again the battle was constant and exacting. I had a physical problem sparked by an emotional response that was like conquering a dragon. It took me six months to gain the upper hand. I could not have done this without their help, encouragement, and persistent reminders: "You can do it. You have a good mind. You are a Christian. You can do it."

I learned we have to know ourselves, our faults and failings, and our strong points. We have to accept ourselves without resistance. (Resistance was one of my worst emotions.) Then we have to change ourselves to become childlike, obedient to God's laws, and trusting Him in all things. Then and then only do we become whole, redeemed, true children of the Father.

God's love is the supreme healing element for body, mind, or spirit. I much needed to become conscious of His love for me. The situation of my early life had clouded my conception of a loving father. I had to build new concepts. God's word tells us over and over of His great, unchanging, eternal love and compassion. In meditation I put myself into His love to absorb it. I learned to take every annoying or disturbing thing and wrap it in His love and give it to Him. And every time it returned to my mind I repeated that process till all those prickly memories were healed. Contemplating His love helped me also to overcome insomnia.

An intellectual belief in God's plan of salvation is only a beginning. It does not make us whole. The thoughts of the mind and heart must be purified. The soul must become submissive to the will of God till we can say with Paul: "Christ liveth in me." "In Him we live and move and have our being." "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

I have spoken of relaxation and meditation elsewhere. Both are necessary. They can be perfected, however, only if the soul is at peace with God and He is in control. It is with our minds and spirits that we lay hold of God. It is true: "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." And our emotions influence

ninety per cent of our thinking. It took years of struggle for me to let go of self and come finally into some semblance of obedience to God's laws of harmony, balance, joy, and peace.

When God lives at the center controlling the whole personality than all life responds to His wholeness. Health is only a part of the whole man. And if the body is impaired or permanently injured, even so the spirit can rise above it all and complete God's plan for the life. We live in our thoughts, attitudes, emotions, in our spirits. Here is where we must receive wholeness.

An idea is a recipe for what may happen. An experience is that idea happening — an original! God becomes original over and over again as each person experiences him, through service, through other persons, through the universe. —Aldous Huxley

OUR GOD

Ruth A. Beasley

When we were little children, we were told
This is the way Christians do things, don't
Act like heathen!
Who are the heathen, Mama?
Aren't we all God's children, Papa?
In the high mountains of Tai-shan,
Birthplace of a great teacher,
I met an ancient Buddhist monk.
There were terrible figures in his temple,
Demon-like with bulging eyes and spiked teeth,
Warriors and guardsmen of the people, the old man told me.
Is this the God you believe in? I asked in wonder.
God means life, he answered me,
Each of these statues represents a phase of life
for our people. What does your God look like?
What do you see? A great big nothing! said he.
I could not answer, I did not know why. . . .
God was only a word to me. I was only five.

SAFE AND SURE

Carla Patsuris

There are "defiants"
armed with guns
while, filled with fear,
others, hesitant, timidly
mumble prayers
to manmade canes. . .
I walk safe and sure
in joyous wonder,
my hand
in the Hand of God.

LITTLE BOY

Margaret I. Mahaffy

Little boy, little boy,
Moments of sorrow, moments of joy,
Little boy, little boy,
Will the time ever come that I'll understand
The little boy lives in the heart of man?

THE GREAT PACIFIC

Phyllis B. Crockett

The Ocean came
To greet us!
Blue and tremendous,
Rushing, then calming.
From distant rocks
Sea Lions barked —
And the bark
Carried over the water.

My Vision
Goes out like the Ocean,
Wondering
Where it might end.

THE FIRST SNOWFLAKE

Eleanor Ebersole

"WHERE shall I land?" asked the first snowflake to fall from the gray cloud.

"Anywhere," the cloud replied reassuringly.

"Will this be all right?" whispered back the flake.

"Yes," called the cloud almost imperceptibly.

"How nice," thought the flake as it settled down on the brown branch of a tree it did not know.

"What do you do?" asked the young branch, who had never seen a snowflake before. "Do you sing?"

"I don't think so," replied the snowflake.

"Do you grow?" asked the young branch.

"I don't think so," answered the snowflake.

"What do you do, then?" The branch repeated its first question.

Before the snowflake could answer, another flake landed close beside it. The first snowflake and the branch had not noticed that while they talked the air was beginning to fill with flakes. Snowflakes were landing everywhere.

For a moment the young branch could not tell which of the flakes had been talking.

"Snowflakes fly," said the first snowflake.

"Yes, they do," replied the branch.

"I think they disappear," added the snowflake. It had been watching the flakes that landed on the sidewalk below. They had disappeared.

"Oh," said the little branch. "Will you disappear? I like your company."

"I don't know," said the snowflake. "It's what snowflakes do."

By then the gray snow cloud had moved on, leaving blue sky overhead. The snowflake glistened in the bright cold air.

"Will you stay?" asked the branch again.

"If I can," said the snowflake.

The branch and the snowflake talked the rest of the afternoon. In the morning the snowflake was gone but the brown branch remembered. It rememberedeven after it had grown to be an important part of a great tall tree.

JUST SLEEPING

Hettie Barker

LAST FALL, before the first frost, I carefully brought my geranium plants indoors. They were in three clay pots and still blooming. I took them to the basement and set them in a dark corner for the winter. Then I forgot about them until spring. They slept through the cold winter months.

In the spring, I carried the three dried, dead-looking plants upstairs and set them on the patio, soaking them with water. They looked awful. My husband said, "Why don't you throw those dead things out?" My son looked at me as if something were amiss. But I smiled smugly and said, "Just wait, new shoots and tiny leaves will come out of these old stems. They have just been sleeping."

Sure enough, to the dismay of my husband and son, little green leaves miraculously appeared and those "dead things" were alive and growing.

So it is with us at times. We feel tired, dead tired. But a little nourishment and attention brings us back to life, better and stronger than ever. God is responsible for this miracle. We must never give up. We may rest for a while but He breathes on us the will to live and we are ready to flourish and spread joy to others.

WINGS OF FAITH

Freda Karsin Routh

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles" —Isaiah 40:31

ONE WARM AFTERNOON as I sat reading on my back porch, a mockingbird flew down to bathe in the bird-bath under my big mapletree.

How happy it seemed: splashing and fluttering its wings in the cool water, chirping noisily.

Finally, as I watched, it hopped to the rim of the bath to shake and preen its feathers. Only then did I notice that one of its legs was missing.

A deep sympathy welled up in me. "Oh," I said aloud, you have only one leg!"

Perhaps I imagined it but it seemed to me that the bird looked straight at me. Then it took flight, swooping upward and around in a giant circle. Landing on a branch high up in the maple tree, it let its voice rise in one of the most joyful bird songs I ever heard, as if to say, "You see? There's no need for sadness. I still have wings."

Several times when things have seemed to go all wrong in my life I have looked back to this incident and received inspiration. When the pull of the things of "this world" seems too strong for me, as they must for all of us at times, moments when my heart and mind are earthbound, I think of that little bird, and I say to myself, "But I still have my spiritual wings. I still have my abiding faith in God and His love for me. At any moment I can become quiet and turn to Him in prayer and find the lift I need to rise above feelings of inadequacy."

Just knowing this always brings me a glow of courage and comfort.

CHRIST'S PROMISE

Madge Harrah

MY FRIEND MARILYN died recently in a car wreck. Bright, blond, twenty-five, she had enjoyed and respected the life in herself and in all of God's creatures, large or small, mammal or reptile. She had fed catfood to the giant slugs in her garden, carried spiders outdoors to freedom, rescued turtles from the highway, brought home stray dogs which she treated with objective understanding.

Despite my Christian faith, the shock of Marilyn's sudden death left me with doubts and questions: How could one so alive die 'instantly,' as the coroner stated? Why should a person who had worked so hard to save other living beings from pain wind up crushed beside the road? In that awful moment of impact, what really happened to Marilyn's vibrant spirit?

I began to have nightmares about it, seeing Marilyn trapped forever in the grave. I became afraid of death, afraid to let members of my family out of my sight. Finally in desperation I prayed, "Lord, take away this fear. Give me hope again. Help me to understand."

As though in answer there came the memory of an April afternoon when Marilyn and I had walked together through the flower-fragile woods while my three-year-old son pranced like a sprite ahead of us down the path through a cloud of blue butterflies. The wind was warm and fragrant, filling the air with an elusive magic.

"Look!" Mariyln said, suddenly kneeling beside the path.

I knelt, too, and saw a tiny evergreen tree, only two inches high, with an iridescent beetle in its crown.

"It's perfect!" whispered Marilyn, her face radiant beneath her sun-gold hair. "It's all the beauty of the earth right there! The whole world in one tree and beetle!"

Just then a blue-sneakered foot crashed down between us

and ground the tree into the dirt. We looked first into the gleeful face of my son, and then, with real grief, at each other.

"It's the death of the world," I said.

My son lifted his foot and ran off, unconcerned, down the path. Marilyn and I gazed in mourning at the tree. Then, as we watched, a miracle took place. The crushed tree slowly rose and once again stood erect while the beetle, unharmed, scurried off into the grass. Raising her head in triumph, Marilyn said (and I see her now—lithe and resilient like the tree), "Behold—the Resurrection!"

GIVING BACK HIS LOVE

Adora Jones

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you —John 15:12

CHRIST IS LOVE made real, a living manifestation of the incredible love which God has for us. It is a love so great that He could give His only son to die for our redemption.

Love is the nightly telephone-call from a friend to me as a lonely widow. Love is also the prayer and assurance breathed to me over the telephone during a time of great distress.

Love is a person-to-person relationship expressed by a smiling face, concern for others, joyous acceptance, and kind words and deeds. Love is the profound expression of the Holy Spirit within us, which, unless it is released, will surely wither and die. Love is to be given and received without reservation as God has given His boundless love to us.

How about giving it back to Him?

POEM *by Velta Myrle Allen*

The strength of a soul
against life's stream
is measured by the
sincerity
Of its faith in God
and the promises of
His Word!

THE GREATEST HUMANITARIAN OF HIS TIME

Ann D. Franklin

TODAY'S LACK OF REVERENCE for life, as evidenced by the acts of crime in this country, brings to mind a man who had a total reverence for it—a complete love for anything living.

Albert Schweitzer, born in 1875, at Kayserberg, Alsace, believed that man is ethical only when life is holy to him—all life, that is, including that of plants and animals as well as man.

In his early childhood he became aware of and was saddened by the amount of misery he saw in the world. During his youth he developed his respect for life, beginning with the abhorrence of the killing of animals. He took to heart the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill."

A brilliant man, and the recipient of many awards in the fields of science, medicine, music, and theology, he decided at the age of twenty-one what to do with himself. It was incomprehensible to him that he should lead a happy life when so many people in the world were suffering. After much thought, he decided to give the next nine years of his life to the arts and sciences, and, at thirty, to devote the remainder of his life to serving humanity.

When he was twenty-nine, his interest was caught by an

article in the Paris Missionary Society magazine. It was entitled, "The Needs of the Congo Mission." When he finished reading it, he knew what his life work would be. He would become a medical missionary and go to Africa and put his religion of love to work.

In 1912, he married Helen Bresslan, the daughter of a Strasbourg historian, who in the years to follow would be of great help to him in his work. In the spring of that year he went to Paris to study tropical medicine.

After his period of study, he raised money enough to found a small hospital. Then he contacted the Paris Missionary Society and offered to serve, at his own expense, as a mission doctor at Lambarene. On Good Friday of 1912 he and his wife began their journey to Africa.

Over the years he was able to build a large hospital and medical station, which served thousands of Africans yearly. In 1952 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his years of service as a humanitarian. He used the $33,000 award to expand the hospital and set up a leper-colony.

Albert Schweitzer, whose love so thoroughly dominated his thought and action, was a man who made a real contribution to mankind. Today, in these troubled times, there are people emulating this great humanitarian—people who have a reverence for life.

BALLAD OF GOOD COUNSEL

Goeffrey Chaucer

Flee from the crowd and dwell with truthfulness,
Suffice thee with thy goods, though they be small.
To hoard, brings hate, to climb brings giddiness:
The crowd has envy, and success blinds all:
Desire no more than to thy lot may fall:
Work well thyself to counsel others clear,
And Truth shall make thee free to know
There is no fear.

(Contributed by Alice Richmond)

WHAT OF THE DAYS

Ruth Bergendahl

What of the days
When just amazed
I watched people
Ring church steeples

What of the days
When just amazed
I watched
And touched
His face.

Never before
Had ever a door
Been opened for
Me.

What of the days
When roses
Bloom again
In blossoms.

Whatever the day
It will bloom
Again
For me.

SUN ON THE MOUNTAIN

Nixeon Civille Handy

Eye follows light over the dark pine
forest tight against night,
Lifts to the mountain-peak
blazed in day-sun.

Green-limbed I rise, wanting,
I walk into fire. Unrolled, the sun
streaks the trees. Dark limbs
breathe gold. Radiate a thousand
signals. Praise! Praise!

NOTICES & COMMENT

NEW CONTRIBUTING EDITOR. We are very pleased to announce that Eleanor Ebersole has become a Contributing Editor of this publication. Eleanor—who lives in a delightful house by the Susquehanna River in West Fairview, Pennsylvania—is familiar to our readers because of the unique stories and tales of hers that we publish regularly. She describes herself as follows: "Mother of two children now young adults, wife, lover of nature, poet since fourteen, writer and composer, believer in Christ." We are grateful for Eleanor's support of the Fellowship in many ways and proud to have her listed now on our masthead.

DO YOU KNOW "OPINION"? One of the Fellowship's most helpful friends for a long while has been James E. Kurtz, editor of *Opinion — A Journal of Free Thought.* In its pages or in speeches around the country Jim has been generous about plugging F.I.P. Now, we think, it is our turn to compliment his magazine. If you want more stimulating reading, we recommend his article entitled 'Togetherness'—about him and his wife—in the current issue. We think it is unique.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE. As of January 1, 1977, the Fellowship was obliged by the rise in cost of everything to raise its rate to five dollars per year (six dollars overseas).

ARE YOU MOVING? If you are, it is imperative that you send us your new address as soon as possible.

The quotations scattered throughout this issue were collected and contributed by Nixeon Civille Handy.

THE REBIRTH

Ella Castle Nedrow

For many years I took God's gifts,
Nor thanked Him for their beauty;
Providing me with all these things,
I deemed, was just God's duty.

Cool, running water slaked my thirst;
The sun came out to cheer me;
I never knew dire hunger pangs;
His comforts using freely.

One day I looked out from my room
In a hospital, elated,
At all the beauty I observed. . .
A reaction quite belated.

How did I live through all those years,
Unmindful of a sunrise,
Or of a sunset's blended hues,
Whose glory filled my eyes.

On bended knee, I come to Him,
Whom a selfish life has spared;
And thankfulness now reigns, supreme,
In a heart that never cared.

SONG

Margaret B. Purcell

Songs are forged in fire and tears;
Songs are coined from love and fears;
Songs of jealousy, triumph, praise;
Songs of the spendthrift who flings away days;
Songs are deep and dark as the ground;
Songs are lost, some never found;
Songs of delight in life and living;
Songs of the poor, songs of giving;
Songs of the weary, sick, the dying;
Songs of truth, songs of lying;
Songs are woven from wind and rain;
Songs immortal born of pain;
Songs of eloquence prose and rhyme;
Songs are endless flow into Time.

Blessed is the man who sings God's songs!
Joy will exhalt him his whole life long.

COMMUNION MEDITATION

Marie Elmore Baxter

This Supper, Lord, before us spread,
The crimson cup, the snowy bread,
Are ancient symbols that we share
With all who kneel with us in prayer.

This is a shrine of refuge, peace,
And for this moment trials cease
To trouble hearts, becloud our minds,
For in a fellowship that binds

Us soul to soul, we breathe Thy name,
Are set afire with Holy Flame;
Regardless of our varied creeds
We place before Thee now our needs;

And in the quiet of this hour
We feel the wonder of Your Power.

SOLUTION

William Walter De Bolt

When so much work came up at once,
Far more than I could do,
I acted like it was all done
And loafed the whole day through.

A NEW BEGINNING

Estelle D. Broadrick

Each day is a new page to write on,
Each dawn is beginning anew —
Keep the record clean and neat,
It depends entirely on you.
Yesterday's deeds are beyond recall,
Yesterday's words are spoken —
Wounds were made, beware today
Lest other hearts are broken.
Let Yesterday go. This is your day,
Let your heart take up the refrain,

To live for God, with God — in God,
Take courage and start over again.

RETURN VISIT

Jaye Giammarino

God, as man
left his footprints on earth
and carried the cross
for mankind.

Man, left
his footprints on the moon
and carried the flag
for peace.

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THE RIVER OF PERSEVERANCE

Jean Wyness

There are many strata in bereavement's sphere —
shock rends life's surface, bares layer

after layer of grief. Our crust of courage
covers bitter soil where cares flourish

and thrust roots deep into the ashes of yesterday;
guilt's gravel breaks loose, self-pity like clay

clings to sharp edges of loneliness. But there,
craving through grief with power won in prayer,

the river of perseverance flows on, ever on,
sifting silt from deep waters, smoothing each stone,

spreading its treasure for all who would share
a plain borne from a mountain, victory from despair.

(Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent those of the Fellowship or its Editor.)

Forgive Me, Lord

Forgive me, Lord, if for today
I am like the water, turbulent,
Angry, churned,
Not reflecting Thee.

Forgive me, Lord, if for today
I could not find Thee soon enough
To stay the storm's swift cloudy warning.

Forgive me, Lord, tomorrow I shall be
Clear and smooth again
Reflecting every wish of Thine,
Like a green mountain lake
In the morning.

Amen

Nixeon Civille Handy ©